

Ansbach BOSS maintains Army crown

ANSBACH, Germany – The Better Opportunities for Single Soldiers program of U.S. Army Garrison Ansbach earned three awards during the annual Army BOSS forum held in Landsdowne, Va.

The program claimed first place for best event for a medium-sized installation for its trip to Austria; second place for overall program at a medium-sized installation; and also took home the President's Gold Award for its 6,000-plus volunteer hours to the community.

This year's hardware marks the third straight year the program has won such honors, despite numerous deployments by units in the community footprint during that timeframe, said Kitty Brown, the morale, welfare and recreation BOSS and special events coordinator.

"BOSS is alive and well at Ansbach," she said. "Our goal is to give single Soldiers programs that entice them to come together as opposed to going downtown and partying too hard."

BOSS operates centers on Bismarck Kaserne and Storck Barracks, and offers trips and community involvement through volunteer programs throughout USAG Ansbach and nearby areas.

Despite being recognized as one of the Army's best programs, BOSS president Sgt. Joshua Furlong of 3-159th Aviation said he's still not satisfied. "I knew about BOSS beforehand, but I thought it was mandated Army fun until I (became involved) in it last year; I kind of fell in love with the program," said Furlong, who's been president since November. "The program is what people make of it."

Furlong said to further improve the program, BOSS needs more command support and involvement from Soldiers.

"Soldiers are a hard market—it's hit and miss with them," he said. "But once I get them in the door and to one of our events, they come



Following a Lt. Dan Band concert, Lt. Col. Tammy McKenna, USAG Ansbach commander, holds up two of the Army-level trophies the post BOSS program recently earned. McKenna and BOSS president Sgt. Joshua Furlong then gave away free trips to Spain to several BOSS Soldiers.

back. It's mainly an issue of changing the 'mandated Army fun' image many have of the program."

Furlong said Army leaders can help by educating Soldiers on the program and appointing top-notch Soldiers to serve as unit representatives and to advocate the program to fellow servicemembers.

"BOSS has evolved a lot in the past 10 years," Furlong said. "The Army realizes that Soldiers involved with BOSS don't get into trouble; they don't get charged with drunken Driving; they are good at their jobs; and they re-enlist."

With many units facing deployment to Iraq this summer, Furlong is putting a plan in place to ensure Soldiers downrange get BOSS support, while keeping the program alive within USAG Ansbach.

"I was in Afghanistan, so I know what it's like," Furlong said. "We'll do whatever we can to help them."

We'll also be sending care packages to single Soldiers.”

Furlong believes the reason the Ansbach program is successful is because of Soldiers’ involvement. “We give Soldiers an opportunity to get out and have fun, but we also give them ownership in the things we do,” he said.

“Younger Soldiers sometimes get frustrated at work because they’re very smart and ready to be in leadership positions. But you can only have so many chiefs.

“At BOSS, we give them an opportunity to step up, take a leadership position and join our family,” he added. “They get the opportunity to learn some new experiences and skills—developing them and building better people.”

Story and photo by Jim Hughes
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